

Resource Budget 2016-17

High Level Equality Screening Proforma

1. Department:

DEPARTMENT	DE	
2016-17 Final Budget	Non Ringfenced RDEL	1,947.5
	Ringfenced RDEL	0.6
	Total Capital DEL	193.7
Announcement in February 2016 by Finance Minister of additional funding to be received in 2016-17 June Monitoring	Non Ringfenced RDEL	20.0

2. Overview:

Under its current structure, DE's vision is for "an education system that is recognised internationally for the quality of its teaching and learning and for the achievements of its young people, and of an education service that has at its centre a focus on the needs of children and young people".

The Department wants to see every young person achieving to his or her potential at each stage of his or her development. This is supported by the following five goals:

- Raising standards for all;
- Closing the performance gap, increasing access and equity;
- Developing the education workforce;
- Improving the learning environment; and
- Transforming the governance and management of education.

Following the Fresh Start Agreement children's services will transfer to a new Department of Education in May 2016 from the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM). This means that the Department will have a new and wider remit from 2016-17 onwards.

The functions transferring are:

Childcare Strategy – this has two high level aims:

- To promote child development; and
- To enable parents to join the workforce.

Each of these will, in turn contribute to enhanced levels of economic activity, greater equality and social inclusion, and reduced child poverty, thereby delivering social change.

Other functions relating to Children and Young People – support the following aims:

- To ensure that the best interests and well being of children and young people are central to every policy decision made by Government which impacts on their lives; and
- To work with departments and stakeholders to identify gaps, additional actions and alternative ways of working across policy areas and services being delivered; and
- To address the challenge of lineage and alignment of a significant number of strategies across departments, agencies and children's authorities which impact on children's lives.

The above changes present the Department with a fresh challenge to create a new organisation which has children's services fully integrated into its vision, strategic planning framework, target setting and governance arrangements. The change also creates a much

wider range of stakeholders which has obvious implications for future communication, involvement and engagement.

Moving forward the Department will continue to retain a clear focus on ensuring that every young person is supported to achieve to their full potential at each stage of their development. It will also ensure that there is a strategic and co-ordinated approach to improving the wellbeing of children and young people. Further work will be undertaken to develop a revised vision and supporting strategic planning framework for the new organisation prior to May 2016.

The Department's primary statutory duty is to promote the education of the people of the north of Ireland and to ensure the effective implementation of education policy.

A key emphasis is to ensure that every learner fulfils their full potential. Equality of opportunity is therefore central, not only in relation to Section 75 groups but to any children or young people affected by educational disadvantage.

Key Spending Areas:

RESOURCE BUDGET

Aggregated Schools Budget (ASB)

The ASB provides the core front line funding directly to all schools for the delivery of the education curriculum. It represents almost 60% of the Education Resource Budget and is therefore central to the delivery of all PFG targets. It covers funding for Education Authority (EA) funded schools (controlled and maintained), Grant Maintained Integrated Schools and Voluntary Grammar Schools.

Education Authority Block Grant Budget

The block grant funding is provided to the EA to allow them to undertake their statutory and other responsibilities in the provision of education to controlled and maintained schools in the north of Ireland. The funding is split into two high level areas as follows:

- Resources Attributed to Schools from Centre – relating to centrally held funds which are attributable to schools by their nature, such as Teacher Substitution costs (Long term/Maternity etc.); Special Education provision in Mainstream schools, School Rates etc.
- Services to Schools - relating to centrally held funds to cover expenditure for services that are delivered centrally and are the responsibility of the EA to provide, such as school transport; free school meals, pupil support, school library provision as well as the cost of Special Schools.

Other Budgets

These include

- Earmarked funds;
- Voluntary grammar and Grant Maintained Integrated central support costs;
- Other Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs);
- Early Years and Youth; and
- Department of Education.

3. Impacts of 2016-17 Budget Outcome on the 9 Section 75 areas:

Please provide details of impacts on the equality of opportunity for the Section 75 groupings, based on the Budget Outcome. Assessments should consider the questions at Annex A to this proforma. Where relevant please provide references to

departmental or NICS policies that are being used to address equality considerations. All sections should be completed, providing an overall assessment of major, minor or none along with appropriate explanations of that assessment.

Section 75 Group	Impact of 2016-17 Budget Outcome
Persons of a different religious belief	Negligible adverse differential impacts have been identified for this Section 75 Group.
Persons of a different political opinion	Negligible adverse differential impacts have been identified for this Section 75 Group.
Persons of a different racial group	Negligible adverse differential impacts have been identified for this Section 75 Group.
Age	Negligible adverse differential impacts have been identified for this Section 75 Group.
Persons of different marital status	Negligible adverse differential impacts have been identified for this Section 75 Group.
Persons of a different sexual orientation	Negligible adverse differential impacts have been identified for this Section 75 Group.
Gender	Negligible adverse differential impacts have been identified for this Section 75 Group.
Persons with a disability	Negligible adverse differential impacts have been identified for this Section 75 Group.
Persons with dependants and persons without	Negligible adverse differential impacts have been identified for this Section 75 Group.

4. Additional Information:

Any impacts of the Final Budget outcome that are particular to people with multiple identities should be noted here, and the relevant Section 75 categories specified.

Multiple Identities

No impacts have been identified that are particular to people with multiple identities.

Additional information

The final outcome of Budget 2016-17 for the Department has meant that, on a like for like basis with 2015-16, the 2016-17 Resource allocation for Education has been reduced by £72.1m or 3.8%. This has been mitigated by the Education Minister agreeing with the Finance Minister in February 2016 that a further £20m will be allocated to Education as part of the 2016-17 June Monitoring round. In producing a

balanced Resource Budget for 2016-17, the Minister has endeavoured to protect front-line services as far as possible and have due regard to maintaining equality of opportunity. The Minister has also had due regard to advice from the Equality Commission¹ which provides that:

- Section 75 does not prevent difficult decisions being taken, nor does it stop decisions which affect one group more than another; and
- It enables financial decisions which are informed by evidence of the impact they are likely to have, where mitigation and alternative policies have been considered, and which are transparent and accountable.

However, in light of the overall reduction in funding, the Minister has had to make difficult decisions between competing demands for resources. In reaching final decisions on the Budget reductions, the Minister has taken into account:

- Focused on protecting the Aggregated Schools Budget as far as possible, promoting equality and raising education standards;
- Taken into account his strategic priorities for 2016-17;
- Considered the impact of 2015-16 Voluntary Exit Schemes within the Department and NDPBs and the impact of the 2015-16 Budget reductions;
- Secured the continuation of specific programmes that reflect the Department's statutory responsibilities;
- Continued to tackle social disadvantage; and
- Ensured that support for children with Special Education Needs is prioritised, as much as possible.

The Minister has agreed the following Budget reductions in 2016-17:

	£m
ASB	10.0
EA Block Grant	22.0
VGS/GMIS Central Costs	0.9
CCEA	1.0
Other NDPBs (excluding Middletown)	0.1
DE Staffing	1.5
Total	35.5

The Department's NDPBs are the delivery bodies that carry out the front-line services on behalf of the Minister. Where relevant, detailed assessments of the impacts of the above reductions will be carried out by the corresponding NDPBs, as part of their decision making process in determining how to allocate their 2016-17 Budget.

¹ Source: Equality Commission publication: "Budgets and Section 75: A Short Guide" June 2015